Kerry Mootoo

**The Moravian Star**

**4th Grade (21 students)- 45 minutes for a period of 2 classes, maybe 3**

**Social Studies**

**North Carolina Standard Course of Study**

* **Art**
  + 1.02 Create work which approaches a higher level of realism.
  + 2.02 Use additional art media, techniques and processes which may include:
    - Cut paper - complex symmetrical folding and cutting;
  + 3.02 Differentiate horizontal, vertical, parallel, and diagonal lines.
* **Language Arts**
  + **5.09** Create readable documents through legible handwriting (cursive) and/or word processing.
* **Social Studies**
  + **3.02** Identify people, symbols, events, and documents associated with North Carolina's history.
  + **5.01** Explain different celebrated holidays, special days, and cultural traditions in North Carolina communities.
  + **5.02** Describe traditional art, music, and craft forms in North Carolina.

**Student Objective**

* The student will accurately follow directions and make their own Moravian Star based on their personal experiences.

**Materials**

* 21 Scissors
* 8 Glue Sticks (2 per table)
* Colored Pencils, Markers, Crayons
* Print out of star points sheets (20 per student)
* Print out of star base (21 copies)
* Print out of directions (21 copies)

**Procedure**

1. First I will ask the students if they have any symbols in their culture that are important to them and why are they important to them.
2. Then I will introduce the Moravian stars to the students.
3. We will talk about the history behind the star in the Moravian Culture (on a separate sheet of paper)
4. After we are done discussing the Moravian star and what it means in the culture, I will explain to the students that they will be making their own star.
5. They will have to make 20 points for their star, so they need to write down 20 things that mean a lot to them. (We can also brainstorm certain topics such as school, family, etc.)
6. After they have come up with the 20 items they want to put on their star, they will then draw each one on a point.
7. When they are done, they will then cut out the base and the points and glue them together to make the base and the points.
8. They will use the glue to stick the points to the base carefully.
9. As they are waiting to stick the points on, they will write a carefully thought out paper about each of the points, why they chose them, and what is being depicted in each point.
10. Once their stars are made, they will share it with the rest of the class.
11. We can even go further and ask who has some of the same things, why might they have some of the same things.

**Assessment**

For the Star

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| All 20 points are colored neatly and carefully. Each picture is understandable. The paper is neat and provides a good explanation of each point. Grammar is correct throughout the paper. | At least 18 points are colored neatly. The paper is somewhat neat but could use some more detail. There are 3-4 grammatical errors. Turned in on time. | At least 12 points are colored. The paper needs detail or is incomplete. There are 5-8 grammatical errors. Turned in late. | Less than 11 points are colored. The paper is incomplete. There are more than 9 grammatical errors. |

Directions for Moravian Star

<http://www.ehow.co.uk/how_6818735_instructions-moravian-star-tree-topper.html>

<http://www.jennyharada.com/fun-diy-christmas_card_star.html>

<http://www.jennyharada.com/patterns/starpoint.pdf>

<http://www.jennyharada.com/patterns/starbody.pdf>

Information on Moravian Star

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moravian_star>

History of Moravian Star

The first Moravian star is known to have originated in the 1830s at the Moravian Boy's School in Niesky, Germany, most probably as a geometry lesson or project. The first mention is of a 110-point star for the 50th anniversary of the *Paedagogium* (classical school for boys) in Niesky. Around 1880, Peter Verbeek, an alumnus of the school, began making the stars and their instructions available for sale through his bookstore. His son Harry went on to found the Herrnhut Star Factory, which was the main source of stars until World War I. Although damaged at the end of World War II during which Herrnhut was heavily damaged, the Star Factory resumed manufacturing them. Briefly taken over by the Communist DDR government in the 1950s, the factory was returned to the Moravian Church-owned Abraham Dürninger Company, which continues to make the stars in Herrnhut.  Other star-making companies and groups have sprung up since then. Some Moravian congregations have congregation members who build and sell the stars as fund raisers.

Cultural Importance

Although the star originated in the church's schools as a geometry lesson, it was soon adopted throughout the Moravian Church as an Advent symbol. At the time, Moravian Congregations were inhabited exclusively by Moravians and the church owned and controlled all property. Daily life was centered on their Christian faith and there was no distinction between the secular and the sacred, even in their daily activities. Everything was considered worship. It did not take long for the stars to go from a pastime for children to an occupation for the congregation.

Moravian stars continue to be a popular Christmas and Advent decoration throughout the world. The stars are often seen in Moravian nativity and putz displays as a representation of the Star of Bethlehem. Large advent stars shine in the dome of the Frauenkirche in Dresden and over the altar of the Thomaskirche where Johann Sebastian Bach is buried in Leipzig. The city of Winston-Salem, North Carolina, founded by Moravians in 1766, uses the Moravian star as their official Christmas street decoration. In addition, a 31-foot Moravian star, one of the largest in the world, sits atop the North Tower of Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center during the Advent and Christmas seasons.

The use of the stars during the Advent and Christmas season is also a tradition in the West Indies, Greenland, Suriname, Labrador, Central America, South and East Africa and Ladakh in India and parts of Scandinavia, wherever the Moravian Church has sent missionaries.

Types of Stars

There are many forms of Moravian stars, but the most commonly seen and most widely available is the 26-point form, composed of eighteen square and eight triangular cone shaped points. This shape is technically known as a Great Stellated Rhombicuboctahedron. Each face of the geometric solid in the middle, the Rhombicuboctahedron, serves as the base for the "stellations" or starburst points. No matter how many points a star has, a Moravian star has a regular shape, based on polyhedrons. There are Moravian stars with 20, 26, 32, 50, 64 and 110 points that are commonly hand-made in the Moravian schools. The variety comes from the division of the bases of the points---using an octagonal face instead of a square face, etc. For example, the common 26-point Moravian Star becomes a 50-point Star when the squares and triangles that normally make up the faces of the polyhedron become octagons and hexagons. This leaves a 4-sided trapezoidal-shaped hole in the corners of the faces. This is filled with an irregular four sided point. These 4-sided points form a "starburst" in the middle of what looks like a regular 26-point star.

Simple paper decorations made from four folded strips of paper are sometimes incorrectly called "Moravian" stars, but are known as *German stars*, *Swedish stars*, *Bethlehem* stars, or more correctly as *Froebel Stars*, named after Friedrich Fröbel, the German educator who invented them.